A

SERMON,

Preached before HIS GRACE

CHARLES Duke of *Richmond*, *Lenox*, and *Aubigny*,

PRESIDENT;

AND THE

GOVERNORS

OF THE

LONDON INFIRMARY,

FOR THE

RELIEF of Sick and Diſeaſed Perſons, eſpecially MANUFACTURERS, and SEAMEN in MERCHANT-SERVICE, &c.

AT THE

Pariſh-Church of *St. Lawrence-Jewry*,

On THURSDAY, *March* 31, 1748.

By JOSEPH *Lord Biſhop of* BRISTOL.

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1 PET. iv. 8.

And above all things have fervent Charity among yourſelves: for Charity ſhall cover the Multitude of Sins.

AS we owe our Being, and all our Faculties, and the very Opportunities of exerting them to Almighty God, and are plainly His and not our own, we are admoniſhed, even tho' we ſhould *have done all thoſe things which are commanded us, to ſay, We are unprofitable ſervants*[a]. And with much deeper Humility muſt we make this Acknowledgment, when we conſider, in how *many things we have all offended*[b]. But ſtill the Behaviour of ſuch Creatures as Men, highly criminal in ſome

 Reſpects,

[a] Luke xvii. 10. [b] James iii. 2.

Reſpects, may yet in Others be ſuch, as to render them the proper Objects of Mercy, and, our Saviour does not decline ſaying, *thought worthy of it* [c]. And, conformably to our natural Senſe of Things, the Scripture is very expreſs, that Mercy, Forgiveneſs, and in general Charity to our Fellow-creatures, has this Efficacy in a very high Degree.

Several copious and remote Reaſons have been alledged, why ſuch Preheminence is given to this Grace or Virtue; ſome of great Importance, and none of them perhaps without its Weight. But the proper one ſeems to be very ſhort and obvious, that by fervent Charity, with a Courſe of Beneficence proceeding from it, a Perſon may make Amends for the Good he has blameably omitted, and the Injuries he has done, ſo far, as that Society would have no Demand upon him for ſuch his Miſbehaviour; nor conſequently would Juſtice have any in Behalf of Society, whatever it might have upon other Accounts. Thus by fervent Charity he may even merit Forgiveneſs of Men: And this ſeems to afford a very ſingular Reaſon, why it may be graciouſly

[c] Luke xx. 35.

ciouſly granted him by God; a very ſingular Reaſon, the Chriſtian-covenant of Pardon always ſuppoſed, why divine Juſtice ſhould permit, and divine Mercy appoint, that ſuch his Charity ſhould be allowed to *cover the multitude of ſins.*

And this Reaſon leads me to obſerve, what Scripture, and the whole Nature of the thing ſhews, that the Charity here meant muſt be ſuch hearty Love to our Fellow-creatures, as produceth a ſettled Endeavour to promote, according to the beſt of our Judgment, their real laſting Good, both preſent and future; and not that Eaſineſs of Temper, which, with peculiar Propriety, is expreſs'd by the Word Good-humour, and is a Sort of benevolent Inſtinct left to itſelf, without the Direction of our Judgment. For this Kind of Good-humour is ſo far from making the Amends before mentioned, that, tho' it be agreeable in Converſation, it is often moſt miſchievous in every other Intercourſe of Life; and always puts Men out of a Capacity of doing the Good they might, if they could withſtand Importunity, and the Sight of Diſtreſs, when the Caſe requires it ſhould be withſtood: Many Inſtances of which Caſe daily occur, both in Publick and

Private. Nor is it to be ſuppoſed, that we can any more promote the laſting Good of our Fellow-creatures, by acting from mere kind Inclinations, without *conſidering* what are the proper Means of promoting it, than that we can attain our own perſonal Good, by a *thoughtleſs* Purſuit of every thing which pleaſes us. For the Love of our Neighbour, as much as Self-love, the ſocial Affections, as much as the private ones, from their very Nature, require to be under the Direction of our Judgment. Yet it is to be remembred, that it does in no ſort become ſuch a Creature as Man to harden himſelf againſt the Diſtreſſes of his Neighbour, except where it is really neceſſary; and that even well-diſpoſed Perſons may run into great Perplexities, and great Miſtakes too, by being over-ſollicitous in diſtinguiſhing, what are the moſt proper Occaſions for their Charity, or who the greateſt Objects of it. And therefore, as on the one Side, we are obliged to take ſome Care not to ſquander that which, one may ſay, belongs to the Poor, as we ſhall do, unleſs we competently ſatisfy ourſelves beforehand, that what we put to our Account of Charity will anſwer ſome good Purpoſe; ſo on the other ſide, when we

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are competently ſatisfied of this, in any particular Inſtance before us, we ought by no means to neglect ſuch preſent Opportunity of doing Good, under the Notion of making further Inquiries: for of theſe Delays there will be no End.

Having thus briefly laid before you the Ground of that ſingular Efficacy, which the Text aſcribes to Charity in general; obviated the Objection againſt its having this Efficacy; and diſtinguiſhed the Virtue itſelf from its Counterfeits; let us now proceed to obſerve the Genuineneſs and Excellency of the particular Charity, which we are here met together to promote.

Medicine and every other Relief, *under the Calamity of bodily Diſeaſes and Caſualties*, no leſs than the daily Neceſſaries of Life, are natural Proviſions, which God has made for our preſent indigent State; and which he has granted in common to the Children of Men, whether they be poor or rich: to the Rich by Inheritance, or Acquiſition; and by their Hands to the diſabled Poor.

Nor can there be any Doubt, but that publick Infirmaries are the moſt effectual Means of adminiſtring ſuch Relief; beſides that they are attended with incidental Advantages

tages of great Importance: Both which Things have been fully ſhewn, and excellently enforced, in the annual Sermons upon this and the like Occaſions.

But indeed publick Infirmaries are not only the beſt, they are the only poſſible Means by which the Poor, eſpecially in this City, can be provided, in any competent Meaſure, with the ſeveral Kinds of Aſſiſtance, which *bodily Diſeaſes and Caſualties* require. Not to mention poor Foreigners; 'tis obvious no other Proviſion can be made for poor Strangers out of the Country, when they are overtaken by theſe Calamities, as they often muſt be, whilſt they are occaſionally attending their Affairs in this Centre of Buſineſs. But even the Poor who are ſettled Here, are in a manner Strangers to the People amongſt whom they live: and, were it not for this Proviſion, muſt unavoidably be neglected, in the Hurry and Concourſe around them, and be left unobſerved to lanquiſh in Sickneſs, and ſuffer extremely, much more than they could in leſs populous Places; where every one is known to every one; and any great Diſtreſs, preſently becomes the common Talk; and where alſo poor Families are often under the particular

particular Protection of ſome or other of their rich Neighbours, in a very different Way from what is commonly the Caſe Here. Obſervations of this Kind ſhew, that there is a peculiar Occaſion, and even Neceſſity, in ſuch a City as this, for publick Infirmaries, to which eaſy Admittance may be had, and here in Ours no Security is required, nor any ſort of Gratification allowed; and that they ought to be multiplied, or enlarged proportionably to the Increaſe of our Inhabitants: for to this the Increaſe of the Poor will always bear Proportion; tho' leſs in Ages of Sobriety and Diligence, and greater in Ages of Profuſion and Debauchery.

Now tho' nothing, to be called an Objection in the Way of Argument, can be alledged againſt thus providing for poor ſick People, in the propereſt, indeed the only Way in which they can be provided for; yet Perſons of too ſevere Tempers can, even upon this Occaſion, talk in a Manner, which, contrary ſurely to their Intention, has a very malignant Influence upon the Spirit of Charity——talk of the Ill-deſerts of the Poor, the good Uſes they might make of being let to ſuffer more than they do, un-

der Diſtreſſes which they bring upon themſelves, or however might, by Diligence and Frugality, provide againſt; and the idle Uſes they may make of knowing beforehand, that they ſhall be relieved in Caſe of *thoſe Diſtreſſes*. Indeed there is ſuch a Thing as a Prejudice againſt them, ariſing from their very State of Poverty, which ought greatly to be guarded againſt; a Kind of Prejudice, to which perhaps moſt of us, upon ſome Occaſions, and in ſome Degree, may inattentively be liable, but which Pride and Intereſt may eaſily work up to a ſettled Hatred of them; the utter Reverſe of that amiable Part of the Character of *Job*, that *he was a father to the poor*[b]. But 'tis undoubtedly fit, that ſuch of them as are good and induſtrious ſhould have the Satisfaction of knowing beforehand, that they ſhall be relieved under *Diſeaſes and Caſualties*: and Thoſe, 'tis moſt obvious, ought to be relieved preferably to Others. But theſe others, who are not of that good Character, might poſſibly have the Apprehenſion of thoſe Calamities in ſo great a Degree, as would be very miſchievous, and of no Service, if they thought they muſt be left to periſh under them. And tho' their

[b] Job xxix. 16.

their Idleneſs and Extravagance are very inexcuſable, and ought by all reaſonable Methods to be reſtrained; and they are highly to be blamed for not making ſome Proviſion againſt Age and ſuppoſeable Diſaſters, when tis in their Power; yet 'tis not to be deſired, that the Anxieties of Avarice ſhould be added to the natural Inconveniencies of Poverty.

It is ſaid, that our common Fault towards the Poor is not Harſhneſs, but too great Lenity and Indulgence. And if allowing them in Debauchery, Idleneſs and open Beggary; in Drunkenneſs, profane Curſing and Swearing in our Streets, nay in our Houſes of Correction; if this be Lenity, there is doubtleſs a great deal too much of it. And ſuch Lenity towards the Poor is very conſiſtent with the moſt cruel Neglects of them, in the extream Miſery to which thoſe Vices reduce them. Now tho' this laſt certainly is not our general Fault; yet it cannot be ſaid, every one is free from it. For this Reaſon, and that nothing, which has ſo much as the Shadow of an Objection againſt our publick Charities, may be intirely paſſed over, you'll give me Leave to conſider a little the ſuppoſed Caſe above-mentioned, tho'

poſſibly Some may think it unneceſſary, that of Perſons reduced to Poverty and Diſtreſs by their own Faults.

Inſtances of this there certainly are. But it ought to be very diſtinctly obſerved, that in judging which are ſuch, we are liable to be miſtaken: and more liable to it, in judging to what Degree thoſe are faulty, who really are ſo in ſome Degree. However, we ſhould always look with Mildneſs upon the Behaviour of the Poor; and be ſure not to expect more from them than can be expected, in a moderate Way of conſidering Things. We ſhould be forward, not only to admit and encourage the Good-deſerts of ſuch as do well, but likewiſe as to thoſe of them who do not, be ever ready to make due Allowances for their bad Education, or, which is the ſame, their having had none; for what may be owing to the ill Example of their Superiors, as well as Companions, and for Temptations of all Kinds. And remember always, that be Mens Vices what they will, they have not forfeited their Claim to Relief under Neceſſities, till they have forfeited their Lives to Juſtice.

Our heavenly father is kind to the unthankful and to the evil: and ſendeth his rain

rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt[c]. And, in Imitation of Him, our Saviour expreſsly requires, that our Beneficence be promiſcuous. But we have moreover the divine Example for relieving thoſe Diſtreſſes, which are brought upon Perſons by their own Faults; and this is exactly the Caſe we are conſidering. Indeed the general Diſpenſation of Chriſtianity is an Example of this; for its general Deſign is to ſave us from our Sins, and the Puniſhments which would have been the juſt Conſequence of them. But the divine Example in the daily Courſe of Nature, is a more obvious and ſenſible one. And tho' the natural Miſeries which are foreſeen to be annext to a vicious Courſe of Life, are providentially intended to prevent it, in the ſame Manner as Civil Penalties are intended to prevent Civil Crimes; yet thoſe Miſeries, thoſe natural Penalties admit of, and receive natural Reliefs, no leſs than any other Miſeries, which could not have been foreſeen or prevented. Charitable Providence then, thus manifeſted in the Courſe of Nature, which is the Example of our heavenly Father, moſt evidently leads us to relieve, not only ſuch Diſtreſſes as were unavoidable,

[c] Matt. v. 45. Luke vi. 35.

avoidable, but alſo ſuch as People by their own Faults have brought upon themſelves. The Caſe is, that we cannot judge in what Degree it was intended they ſhould ſuffer, by conſidering what, in the natural Courſe of Things, would be the whole bad Conſequences of their Faults, if thoſe Conſequences were not prevented, when Nature has provided Means to prevent great Part of them. We cannot, for Inſtance, eſtimate what Degree of preſent Sufferings God has annext to Drunkenneſs, by conſidering the Diſeaſes which follow from this Vice, as they would be if they admitted of no Reliefs or Remedies: but by conſidering the remaining Miſery of thoſe Diſeaſes, after the Application of ſuch Remedies as Nature has provided. For as tis certain on the one Side, that thoſe Diſeaſes are providential Corrections of Intemperance, tis as certain on the other, that the Remedies are providential Mitigations of thoſe Corrections; and altogether as much providential, when adminiſtred by the good Hand of Charity in the Caſe of our Neighbour, as when adminiſtred by Self-love in our own. Thus the Pain, and Danger, and other Diſtreſſes of Sickneſs and Poverty remaining, after all the charitable

ritable Relief which can be procured; and the many uneaſy Circumſtances which cannot but accompany that Relief, tho' diſtributed with all ſuppoſeable Humanity; theſe are the natural Corrections of Idleneſs and Debauchery, ſuppoſing theſe Vices brought on thoſe Miſeries. And very ſevere Corrections they are: and they ought not to be increaſed by witholding that Relief, or by Harſhneſs in the Diſtribution of it. Corrections of all Kinds, even the moſt neceſſary ones, may eaſily exceed their proper Bounds: and when they do ſo, they become miſchievous; and miſchievous in the Meaſure they exceed it. And the natural Corrections, which we have been ſpeaking of, would be exceſſive, if the natural Mitigations provided for them were not adminiſtred.

Then Perſons, who are ſo ſcrupulouſly apprehenſive of every thing, which can poſſibly, in the moſt indirect Manner, encourage Idleneſs and Vice; which, by the way, any thing may accidentally do; ought to turn their Thoughts to the moral and religious Tendency of Infirmaries. The religious Manner in which they are carried on has

has itſelf a direct Tendency to bring the Subject of Religion into the Conſideration of thoſe whom they relieve; and, in ſome Degree, to recommend it to their Love and Practice, as it is productive of ſo much Good to them, as reſtored Eaſe and Health, and a Capacity of reſuming their ſeveral Employments. 'Tis to Virtue and Religion, they may mildly be admoniſhed, that they are indebted for their Relief. And this, amongſt other Admonitions of their ſpiritual Guide, and the Quiet and Order of their Houſe, out of the Way of bad Examples, together with a regular Courſe of Devotion, which it were greatly to be wiſhed might be Daily; theſe Means, 'tis to be hoped, with the common Grace of God, may enforce deeply upon their Conſciences thoſe ſerious Conſiderations, to which a State of Affliction naturally renders the Mind attentive, and that they will return, as from a religious Retreat, to their ſeveral Employments in the World, with laſting Impreſſions of Piety in their Hearts. By ſuch united Advantages, which theſe poor Creatures can in no ſort have any other Way, very remarkable Reformations have been wrought. Perſons of the ſtricteſt Characters therefore would give a more ſatisfactory Proof, not to the

the World, but to their own Conſciences, of their Deſire to ſuppreſs Vice and Idleneſs, by ſetting themſelves to cultivate the religious Part of the Inſtitution of Infirmaries, which, I think, would admit of great Improvements [d]; than by allowing themſelves to talk in a Manner, which tends to diſcountenance either the Inſtitution itſelf, or any particular Branch of it.

Admitting then the Uſefulneſs and Neceſſity of theſe Kinds of Charity, which indeed cannot be denied; *yet every thing has its Bounds.* And, in the Spirit of Severity before mentioned, 'tis imagined, that *People are enough diſpoſed*, ſuch, it ſeems, is the preſent Turn, *to contribute largely to them.* And Some, whether from Diſlike of the Charities themſelves, or from mere Profligateneſs, think *theſe formal Recommendations of them at Church every Year, might very well be ſpared.*

But ſurely 'tis deſirable, that a cuſtomary Way ſhould be kept open, for removing Prejudices as they may ariſe againſt theſe Inſtitutions; for rectifying any Miſrepreſentations which may, at any Time, be made of them; and informing the Publick of any new

[d] See Mr. *Tucker's* Sermon before the Governors of the *Briſtol-Infirmary*, 1746.

new Emergencies; as well as for repeatedly enforcing the known Obligations of Charity, and the Excellency of this particular Kind of it. Then Sermons, you know, amongſt Proteſtants, always of Courſe accompany theſe more ſolemn Appearances in the Houſe of God: nor will theſe latter be kept up without the other. Now publick Devotions ſhould ever attend, and conſecrate publick Charities. And it would be a ſad Preſage of the Decay of theſe Charities, if ever they ſhould ceaſe to be profeſſedly carried on in the Fear of God, and upon the Principles of Religion. It may be added, that real charitable Perſons will approve of theſe frequent Exhortations to Charity, even tho' they ſhould be conſcious, that they do not themſelves ſtand in Need of them, upon Account of ſuch as do. And Such can poſſibly have no Right to complain of being too often admoniſhed of their Duty, till they are pleaſed to practiſe it. Tis true indeed we have the Satisfaction of ſeeing a Spirit of Beneficence prevail, in a very commendable Degree amongſt all Ranks of People, and in a very diſtinguiſhed Manner in ſome Perſons amongſt the higheſt; yet 'tis evident, too many of all Ranks are very deficient in it, who

who are of great Ability, and of whom much might be expected. Tho' every Thing therefore were done in Behalf of the Poor which is wanted, yet theſe Perſons ought repeatedly to be told, how highly blameable they are for letting it be done without them; and done by Perſons, of whom great Numbers muſt have much leſs Ability than they.

But whoever can really think, that the Neceſſities of the diſabled Poor are ſufficiently provided for already, muſt be ſtrangely prejudiced. If one were to ſend you to them themſelves to be better informed, you would readily anſwer, that their Demands would be very extravagant; that Perſons are not to be their own Judges in Claims of Juſtice, much leſs in thoſe of Charity. You then, I am ſpeaking to the hard People above-mentioned, you are to judge, what Proviſion is to be made for the Neceſſitous, ſo far as it depends upon your Contributions. But ought you not to remember, that you are intereſted, that you are Parties in the Affair, as well as they. For is not the Giver as really ſo, as the Receiver? And as there is Danger, that the Receiver will err one Way, is there not Danger, that the Giver may err the other? Since it is not Matter of arbitrary Choice, which has no

Rule, but Matter of real Equity, to be conſidered as in the Preſence of God, what Proviſion ſhall be made for the Poor? And therefore, tho' you are yourſelves the only Judges, what you will do in their Behalf, for the Caſe admits no other; yet let me tell you, you will not be impartial, you will not be equitable Judges, until you have guarded againſt the Influence, which Intereſt is apt to have upon your Judgment; and cultivated within you the Spirit of Charity to balance it. Then you will ſee the various remaining Neceſſities which call for Relief. But that there are many ſuch, muſt be evident at firſt ſight to the moſt careleſs Obſerver, were it only from hence, that both this and the other Hoſpitals are often obliged to reject poor Objects which offer, even for want of Room, or Wards to contain them.

Notwithſtanding many Perſons have Need of theſe Admonitions, yet there is a good Spirit of Beneficence, as I obſerved, pretty generally prevailing. And I muſt congratulate you upon the great Succeſs it has given to the particular good Work before us; great I think beyond all Example for the Time it has ſubſiſted. Nor would it be unſuitable to the preſent Occaſion, to recount the

the Particulars of this Succeſs. For the neceſſary Accommodations which have been provided, and the Numbers who have been relieved, in ſo ſhort a Time, cannot but give high Reputation to the *London Infirmary*. And the Reputation of any particular Charity, like Credit in Trade, is ſo much real Advantage, without the Inconveniences to which that is ſometimes liable. It will bring in Contributions for its Support; and Men of Character, as they ſhall be wanted, to aſſiſt in the Management of it; Men of Skill in the Profeſſions, Men of Conduct in Buſineſs, to perpetuate, improve and bring it to Perfection. So that you the Contributors to this Charity, and more eſpecially thoſe of you by whoſe immediate Care and Economy it is in ſo high Repute, are encouraged to go on with *your Labour of Love*[a], not only by the preſent Good, which you ſee is here done, but likewiſe by the Proſpect of what will probably be done, by your Means, in future Times, when this Infirmary ſhall become, as I hope it will, no leſs renowned than the City in which it is eſtabliſhed.

But to ſee how far it is from being yet compleat, for want of Contributions, one need only look upon the ſettled Rules of the

[a] Heb. vi. 10.

Houſe for *Admiſſion of Patients.* See there the Limitations which Neceſſity preſcribes, as to the Perſons to be admitted. Read but that one Order, tho' others might be mentioned, that *none who are judged to be in an aſthmatick, conſumptive, or dying Condition, be admitted on any Account whatſoever.* Harſh as theſe Words ſound, they proceed out of the Mouth of Charity herſelf. Charity pronounces it to be better, that poor Creatures who might receive much Eaſe and Relief, ſhould be denied it, if their Caſe does not admit of Recovery, rather than that Others, whoſe Caſe does admit of it, be left to periſh. But it ſhocks Humanity to hear ſuch an Alternative mentioned; and to think, that there ſhould be a Neceſſity, as there is at preſent, for ſuch Reſtrictions, in one of the moſt beneficent and beſt managed Schemes in the World. May more numerous or larger Contibutions, at length, open a Door to ſuch as theſe; that what renders their Caſe in the higheſt Degree compaſſionable, their languiſhing under incurable Diſeaſes, may no longer exclude them from the Houſe of Mercy.

But beſides the Perſons to whom I have been now more particularly ſpeaking, there

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are Others, who do not caſt about for Excuſes for not contributing to the Relief of the Neceſſitous; perhaps are rather diſpoſed to relieve them; who yet are not ſo careful as they ought to be, to put themſelves into a Capacity of doing it. For we are as really accountable for not doing the Good which we might have in our Power to do, if we would manage our Affairs with Prudence, as we are for not doing the Good which is in our Power now at preſent. And hence ariſe the Obligations of Economy upon People in the higheſt, as well as in the lower Stations of Life, in Order to enable themſelves to do that Good, which, without Economy, both of them muſt be incapable of; even tho' without it, they could anſwer the ſtrict Demands of Juſtice; which yet we find neither of them can. *A good man ſheweth favour, and lendeth*; *and*, to enable himſelf to do ſo, *he will guide his affairs with diſcretion*[c]. For want of this, many a one has reduced his Family to the Neceſſity of aſking Relief from thoſe publick Charities, to which he might have left them in a Condition of largely contributing.

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[c] Pſal. cxii. 5.

As Economy is the Duty of all Perſons, without Exception, Frugality and Diligence are Duties which particularly belong to the middle, as well as lower Ranks of Men; and more particularly ſtill to Perſons in Trade and Commerce, whatever their Fortunes be. For Trade and Commerce cannot otherwiſe be carried on, but is plainly inconſiſtent with Idleneſs and Profuſion: tho' indeed were it only from Regard to Propriety, and to avoid being abſurd, every one ſhould conform his Behaviour to what his Situation in Life requires, without which the Order of Society muſt be broken in upon. And conſidering how inherited Riches, and a Life of Leiſure are often employed, the Generality of Mankind have Cauſe to be thankful, that their Station exempts them from ſo great Temptations; that it engages them in a ſober Care of their Expences, and in a Courſe of Application to Buſineſs: eſpecially as theſe Virtues, moreover, tend to give them, what is an excellent Ground-work for all others, a ſtayed Equality of Temper and Command of their Paſſions. But when a Man is diligent and frugal, in Order to have it in his Power to do Good; when he is more induſtrious, or

more

more ſparing, perhaps, than his Circumſtances neceſſarily require, that he may *have to give to him that needeth*[f]; when he *labours in order to ſupport the weak*[g]; ſuch Care of his Affairs is itſelf Charity, and the actual Beneficence which it enables him to practiſe, is additional Charity.

You will eaſily ſee, why I inſiſt thus upon theſe Things, becauſe I would particucularly recommend the good Work before us to all Ranks of People in this great City. And I think I have Reaſon to do ſo, from the Conſideration, that it very particularly belongs to them to promote it. The Goſpel indeed teaches us to look upon every one in Diſtreſs as our Neighbour, yet Neighbourhood in the literal Senſe, and likewiſe ſeveral other Circumſtances, are providential Recommendations of ſuch and ſuch Charities, and Excitements to them; without which the Neceſſitous would ſuffer much more than they do at preſent. For our general Diſpoſition to Beneficence would not be ſufficiently directed, and in other Reſpects would be very ineffectual, if it were not called forth into Action by ſome or other of thoſe providential Circumſtances; which

[f] Eph. iv. 28. [g] Acts xx. 35.

which form particular Relations between the Rich and the Poor, and are of Courſe regarded by every one in ſome Degree. But tho' many Perſons among you, both in the Way of Contributions, and in other Ways no leſs uſeful, have done even more than was to be expected, yet, I muſt be allowed to ſay, that I do not think, the Relation the Inhabitants of this City bear to the Perſons for whom our Infirmary was principally deſigned, is ſufficiently attended to by the Generality ; which may be owing to its late Eſtabliſhment. It is you know deſigned principally for *diſeaſed Manufacturers, Seamen in Merchant-Service, and their Wives and Children:* and *poor Manufacturers* comprehend all who are employed in any Labour whatever belonging to Trade and Commerce. The Deſcription of theſe Objects ſhew their Relation, and a very near one it is, to you, my Neighbours, the Inhabitants of this City. If any of your domeſtick Servants were diſabled by Sickneſs, there is none of you but would think himſelf bound to do ſomewhat for their Relief. Now theſe Seamen and Manufacturers are employed in your immediate Buſineſs. They are Servants of Merchants, and other principal Traders ;

Traders ; as much your Servants as if they lived under your Roof : tho' by their not doing ſo, the Relation is leſs in ſight. And ſuppoſing they do not all depend upon Traders of lower Rank, in exactly the ſame Manner, yet many of them do ; and they have all Connexions with you, which give them a Claim to your Charity preferably to Strangers. They are indeed Servants of the Publick ; and ſo are all induſtrious poor People, as well as they. But that does not hinder the latter from being more immediately Yours. And as their being Servants to the Publick, is a general Recommendation of this Charity to all other Perſons, ſo their being more immediately Yours, is, ſurely, a particular Recommendation of it to You. Notwithſtanding all this, I will not take upon me to ſay, that every one of you is blameable who does not contribute to your Infirmary, for Yours it is in a peculiar Senſe : but I will ſay, that thoſe of you who do, are highly commendable. I will ſay more, that you promote a very excellent Work, which your particular Station is a providential Call upon you to promote. And there can be no ſtronger Reaſon than this for do-

ing any thing, except the one Reaſon, that it would be criminal to omit it.

Theſe Conſiderations, methinks, might induce every Trader of higher Rank in this City, to become a Subſcriber to the Infirmary which is named from it; and Others of you, to contribute ſomewhat yearly to it, in the Way in which ſmaller Contributions are given. This would be a moſt proper Offering out of your Increaſe to Him, whoſe *bleſſing maketh rich*[h]. Let it be more or leſs, *Every man according as he purpoſeth in his heart; not grudgingly, or of neceſſity: for God loveth a chearful giver*[i].

The large Benefactions of ſome Perſons of Ability, may be neceſſary in the firſt Eſtabliſhment of a publick Charity, and are greatly uſeful afterwards, in maintaining it. But the Expences of this before us, in the Extent and Degree of Perfection to which one would hope it might be brought, cannot be effectually ſupported, any more than the Expences of Civil Goverment, without the Contribution of great Numbers. You have already the Aſſiſtance of Perſons of higheſt Rank and Fortune, of which the Liſt of our Governors, and the preſent Appearance, are illuſtrious Examples. And their Aſſiſtance

[h] Prov. x. 22. [i] 2 Cor. ix. 7.

ſiſtance would be far from leſſening by a general Contribution to it amongſt yourſelves. On the contrary, the general Contribution to it amongſt yourſelves which I have been propoſing, would give it ſtill higher Repute, and more invite ſuch Perſons to continue their Aſſiſtance, and accept the Honour of being in its Direction. For the greateſt Perſons receive Honour from taking the Direction of a good Work, as they likewiſe give Honour to it. And by theſe concurrent Endeavours, our Infirmary might at length be brought to anſwer, in ſome competent Meaſure, to the Occaſions of our City.

Bleſſed are they who employ their Riches in promoting ſo excellent a Deſign. The temporal Advantages of them are far from coming up, in Enjoyment, to what they promiſe at a Diſtance. But the diſtinguiſhed Priviledge, the Prerogative of Riches is, that they increaſe our Power of doing Good. This is their proper Uſe. In Proportion Men make this Uſe of them, they imitate Almighty God; and co-operate together with him in promoting the Happineſs of the World; and may expect the moſt favourable Judgment, which their Caſe will admit

of, at the laſt Day, upon the general, repeated Maxim of the Goſpel, that we ſhall Then be treated Ourſelves as we Now treat Others. They have moreover the Prayers of all good Men, thoſe of them particularly whom they have befriended; and, by ſuch Exerciſe of Charity, they improve within themſelves the Temper of it, which is the very Temper of Heaven. Conſider next the peculiar Force with which this Branch of Charity, Almſgiving, is recommended to us in theſe Words, *He that hath Pity upon the Poor, lendeth unto the Lord*[a]: and in theſe of our Saviour; *Verily I ſay unto you, In as much as ye have done it*, relieved the Sick and Needy, *unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done it unto me*[b]. Beware you do not explain away theſe Paſſages of Scripture, under the Notion, that they have been made to ſerve ſuperſtitious Purpoſes: but ponder them fairly in your Heart; and you will feel them to be of irreſiſtible Weight. Laſtly, let us remember, in how many Inſtances we have all left undone thoſe Things which we ought to have done, and done thoſe Things which we ought not to have done.

Now

[a] Prov. xix. 17. [b] Matt. xxxv. 40.

Now whoever has a ſerious Senſe of this, will moſt earneſtly deſire to ſupply the Good, which he was obliged to have done, but has not, and undo the Evil which he has done, or neglected to prevent; and when that is impracticable, to make Amends in ſome other Way for his Offences——I *can* mean only to our Fellow-Creatures. To make Amends, in ſome Way or other, to a particular Perſon, againſt whom we have offended, either by poſitive Injury, or by Neglect; is an expreſs Condition of our obtaining Forgiveneſs of God, when it is in our Power to make it. And when it is not, ſurely the next beſt Thing is to make Amends to Society by fervent Charity, in a Courſe of doing Good; which Riches, as I obſerved, put very much within our Power.

How unhappy a Choice then do thoſe rich Men make, who ſacrifice all theſe high Prerogatives of their State, to the wretched Purpoſes of Diſſoluteneſs and Vanity, or to the ſordid Itch of heaping up, to no Purpoſe at all; whilſt in the mean Time they ſtand charged with the important Truſt, in which they are thus unfaithful, and of which a ſtrict Account remains to be given?

FINIS.

Such Perſons as are inclined to encourage and promote ſo laudable a Work, are deſired to ſend their Subſcriptions or Benefactions to Meſſ. Minors *and* Boldero, *Bankers, in* Lombard-ſtreet, *who will give proper Receipts for the ſame. And any Perſon inclined by his laſt Will to bequeath a Legacy to this Charity, is deſired to do it in the following Manner,* viz.

Item, *I give and bequeath unto* A. B. *and* C. D. *the Sum of upon Truſt, and to the Intent that they, or one of them, do pay the ſame to the Treaſurer, or Treaſurers for the Time being, of the Society of the Governors of the* London Infirmary, *for the Relief of Sick and Diſeaſed Manufacturers, Seamen in Merchant-Service, their Wives and Children; which ſaid Sum of I deſire may be applied towards carrying on the charitable Deſigns of the ſaid Society.*